

**Sunday**  
**January 19, 2014**  
**4am**

S. LaRue – 1/2014

A text message arrives. I happen to be wide awake and at my work station. For some odd reason, the phone emitting the signal associated with a text doesn't stop my heart, I don't have to plug my eyes back into their sockets and a change of pants is not required.

I live and work alone. I work when I'm inspired, I go to bed when I find myself asleep at my station, a lit cigarette about to burn my fingers. I get up when I'm rested, I eat when I'm hungry and I often forget little things, like the fact that I own a cell phone.

The change from night to day has become completely irrelevant and I either notice it's recently changed, or I don't, and either way, it is not a signal of any kind to me.

All the clocks in my home are dead, almost dead, or broken. I do not look at them. No, really, I don't even consider them to be inanimate. They might as well be in the trunk of my car.

People I know, people I used to be in communication with have learned not to call me. I taught them how not to do something they didn't do regularly in the first place. However, getting every single person you know to agree not to call you, ever again, took a few minutes. It's firmly in place now, silence envelopes me and should someone want to say something to me, maybe ask a question, they use email.

I had a routine there for a while and a new one is slowly developing. I used to leave the house Tuesday morning at 9:45am, spend 2 to 4 hours at a clinic for those of us that are unable to watch television without either crying or screaming, do my weekly shopping afterwards and go directly back home as quickly as time would allow. There I would stay until the following Tuesday at 9:45am.

I was referred to a different clinic after a few rather lively sessions with a small woman that was very insistent that I feel bad about myself. I'd been doing that for well over 50 years and it didn't seem to make watching television any less horrifying than it's always been. Oh, I'm not trying to dance around it, no, no, no. I was FIRED by a psychiatrist. Two short telephone conversations, and we were done.

In the 9 months of my visiting the *"Brain Tickler's Cheerleading Consortium"* I made a couple of friends of the various Noggin-Chimp Adjustment Team members, and we had some jolly times, but the fact is, I improved by my own hand. I liked one fellow in particular in a "pal" capacity, a very humorous, heavy set man who's real line of doling out mental health was based in the hypnotizing of his patients. We'd joke around and I was usually so worked up from not seeing anyone for six days, I couldn't shut the fuck up. He'd say things like, "Smart move," or, "Why do you think that was the wrong thing to do? It was the perfect thing to do!" And once I'd think about it for a second, he was right most of the time. I was the first patient in his work week, and he was the first person I'd see after six days alone every week. It was overly jubilant most of the time.

My new routine is revolving around Thursday mornings at 9:15am, which is when I leave to go get my blood checked. A pulmonary embolism has found me on warfarin to keep my blood thin so maybe it will melt the blood clot in my right lung. Now this poor little hispanic gal is the first, and only person I

see every week, and she is a tad wary of your humble narrator. But that's okay, I'm a total weirdo, she's getting used to it and I'm trying to dial it back when I go there. Then I shop, blah, blah,blah...

So, I'm alone 6 days a week, I have no daily schedule, I often do not know what day it is and no one ever calls me. Can you see how a telephone breaking a possibly 3 week long silence at 4am when I've been awake and working for close to 40 hours straight, could catch me off guard? It wasn't the time of day that was unusual; like I said, a "day" is no longer a measure of time for me, darkness and light outdoors has no meaning. It's the sudden alarm, the wildly-sonic, repeating RING RING RING of something that I'd pretty much forgotten was in the house that startles me so badly. If its in some other room its not as bad, but if its right here on my desk, covered in paperwork and empty cigarette packages, it might as well be someone firing a gun that happens to be preparing to sit in my lap.

But a text message is a single truncated ring and I took it quite well, all things considered.

Transcribe, *I perform at this time.*

Translate, *I invite you to try your hand...*

**Texter:** What up son

**Me:** The lack of punctuation and playfully derogatory moniker assigned to me herein, combined with the hour of the day leads me to believe a certain Alex person has sent this. If so, I bid you a warm "hello"

*I didn't recognize the number, but Alex calls in the middle of the night when he calls, and its often from a number I have not seen previous.*

**T:** I think I got the wrong number. Your response is way too educated gramatically for the actual person I send random texts!

*I thought for certain it was Alex having a go at me...*

**M:** bitch

**T:** Excuse me!?

**M:** I said bitch, bitch

**T:** get bent!

**M:** Alex, I be kickin yo ass in a cold blooded fashion you start lippin off tu me like that! What chew doin my kneegrow?

**T:** you got the wrong asshole

*Nope, I don't think this is Alex any longer... I think its a woman that was trying to make a booty call, and got some crazy old guy by mistake*

**M:** YER he one that texted the wrong asshole, asshole!

**T:** just be more negative. Im sure that will get you far! Honest mistake persons

**M:** thought you were a friend fucking with me at 4am. Try not to get upset. Bad for the health.

**T:** good day

**M:** good morning. about to make coffee. Join me, won't you? We can discuss the ramifications of fate, the presence of chance in our lives, and I'll explain how there are no accidents

**T:** I had a long day and discussing chance by mistake can truly be an accident

**M:** Hah! No, yer not alex!!! Come on! Has this EVER happened to you? Its never happened to me and I make killer coffee and i'm known as a nice guy

**T:** not happened to me but I thought people were coming over and i'm fading. rain check

**M:** Nope. If you thought people were coming over and they're not, you have no excuse, now or never —thats the way life works. I'm Steven, whom might I be addressing?

**T:** I'm Taylor but i'm beat and not leaving my bed

**M:** LIARPANTS! You said people were coming over and now yer in bed? How can you live with

yourself, lying to friendly strangers that YOU called at 4 fucking am! Baby Jesus is crying, can't you hear him???

**T:** I don't care!!! I didn't sign up for them to come over, I was looking out for their safety mainly, and i'm beat

**T:** (interruption text) I'm too beat. Its 4am.

**M:** its 4am. EVERYONE is beat except me. And here I sit, startled by a 4am text from Alex, or so I thought. No pics of me in the phone or id send one. Im not w teenager and selfies arent a habit of mine. WILL YOU PLEASE DRAG YO HINEY OUTTA BED AND WRITE DOWN THESE DIRECTIONS??????? Seriously, how did this happen and how can you sleep when the universe has invited you to dance? The music has started...

**T:** Sleepy good night. Turning my phone off to charge. Rain check at Some point possibly/

**M:** NEVER!

*5 minutes later...*

**M:** rest well

*5 hours later, I send a picture of sunflowers from my garden last spring...*

**M:** good morning. Hope you slept well and have a nice sunday.

It never rains in New Mexico. Lived here for 42 years and have never seen anything even resembling a rain check. Pretty entertaining for 4am on a Sunday morning. Should have sent her a picture of my 20 year old, six foot seven son. We'd have made a second pot of coffee!

I no longer participate in the act of coitus, so no funny business would have transpired. Six days a week, alone. I'm not complaining, but a 4am wrong number text? She deserved to get rattled around a bit, and I hadn't communicated with anyone for almost two weeks! Missed my last blood test "date" due to this fucking cold. I wanted to talk to someone. Anyone.

Taylor...

She probably knows my daughter and wouldn't THAT go over well if she'd have arrived and we knew each other from 10 years ago?

I went back to work, did another 10 hours on a song project, reached a stopping point, took a breather, and wrote this for you, for me, for Taylor...

Coming up on 30 hours. Got a pot of beans cooking.

How do I manage to lose my lighter while sitting in the same place for days at a time?

God dammit...